

years, U.S. agriculture has tripled food and fiber production while usage of land, energy, fertilizer and other inputs has remained steady.

Early in the first session of this Congress, several of my Republican colleagues and I introduced a slate of climate-friendly and farmer-focused bills. These bills are driven by commonsense solutions to benefit our environment and our farm industry.

Our farmers, ranchers, foresters, and producers are the original climate champions. While there is more to be done, we must prevent efforts to fundamentally upend our commodity, conservation, and crop insurance programs to appease Washington think tanks. We must also reject complicating our programs and making climate the focus of every title of the upcoming farm bill reauthorization.

Madam Speaker, under the umbrella of natural land solutions, which includes farmers that grow crops, livestock, and our foresters, the research has shown that at this moment, based on the technology they use, they are responsible for sequestering 6.1 gigatons of carbon annually, greenhouse gas emissions.

To put that into perspective, that takes care of all the greenhouse gas emissions that are emitted on those lands, plus sequestering an additional 10.1 percent. So truly, the American farmer, rancher, and forester are the climate change champions anywhere in the world because of our science, technology, and innovation.

We must ensure agriculture production remains viable in rural America to keep production from increasing in areas of the world with lower environmental standards, worse labor conditions, and fewer food safety considerations. And that is why a robust safety net is critical to keeping farms and production here in the United States while lowering overall global greenhouse gas emissions.

Madam Speaker, our country and our farmers face enormous and immediate challenges including higher food prices, record inflation, and input costs, attacks on our energy independence, crop-protection tools, and dependable labor.

Now, these are the issues I hear about as I travel my district and the country. These are the issues we should be addressing.

I hope at the end of the day we recognize that our voluntary, locally led, incentive-based conservation system is working as intended, and that we must not undermine its continued success in supporting the environment and producers.

American agriculture is science. American agriculture is technology. And American agriculture is innovation. The demands of a 21st century farm economy, and economically viable climate solutions, depend on tools and policies that continue to unleash and increase the United States agriculture productivity.

VIRGIN ISLANDS HISTORY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. STANTON). The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from the Virgin Islands (Ms. PLASKETT) for 5 minutes.

Ms. PLASKETT. Mr. Speaker, the Virgin Islands and its people speak of great resilience. We are a people rich in history and agriculture, struggles and triumphs in the face of disenfranchisement.

March 31, 2022, marked 104 years that the Virgin Islands of the United States have been part of the United States. Our islands were acquired by the United States in the costliest per-acre sale in U.S. land purchase. We became the most easterly point of the United States, and served to protect the Caribbean Basin and the Panama Canal, particularly during World War I.

The sale of the Danish West Indies pulled Denmark out of depression and gave them the capital resources, gold bullion, necessary for them to become the happiest country that we know today. The brutal slavery and serf system that they inflicted on my ancestors, however, was not a happy time.

During the transfer of ceremonies on March 31, 1917, the people of the Virgin Islands, my people, were citizens of no country. All four of my grandparents were alive and living on the island of St. Croix at the time of the transfer.

Only qualified Danish citizens living in Denmark were able to vote in the plebiscite.

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Of my eight great-grandparents, I believe one may have met the land and income requirement mandatory to be able to vote. Only one would have been able to vote for his destiny.

And after the purchase, those living in the territory, my grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, my family, were citizens of no country, nowhere, for 10 years.

Yet, after becoming citizens, Virgin Islanders came immediately to Washington and petitioned, pleaded to be part of the draft. You see, Virgin Islanders, like the other territories, serve and give the ultimate sacrifice in far greater number per capita than those Americans on the mainland. We wanted and still are willing to take on the responsibility, not just the privilege.

Until the United States began ownership of territories, largely comprised of minority, Black and Brown people, disenfranchisement of territories was a temporary condition. From the 1787 Northwest Ordinance until the acquisition of Puerto Rico, lands were deemed territories with the expectation that they would become States.

The disenfranchisement and unequal treatment of people in the Virgin Islands are de jure law. The Insular Cases decided at the turn of the century in the Plessy v. Ferguson-era by the Supreme Court, established a doctrine of separate and unequal status for overseas territories.

However, the disenfranchisement and unequal treatment continues today through court cases in the Bush, Obama, Trump, and now Biden administration, through their oral and written arguments to the Supreme Court, as well as my own colleagues, Congress' unwillingness to grant equal treatment requests made by representatives from the territories.

My fight in Washington has been to level and create equity, to counter the many ways that such disenfranchisement affects our lives, Federal funding, healthcare access, veterans' benefits, structural damage after natural disasters due to longstanding inequitable funding.

It is my deepest honor to be grounded by my history, my parents, and my ancestors from the Virgin Islands, many of whom have played an integral role in the history of this Nation, long even before we were a part of this country; from Denmark Vesey, leader of the Charleston, South Carolina, slave revolt; David Levy Yulee, the first Jewish Senator in the United States; William Leidesdorff, the founder of San Francisco; Edward Wilmot Blyden, one of the founders of Liberia; even today, my predecessor, the first female physician of this body as a Member of Congress, Donna Christensen; and even this weekend, NCAA Women's Basketball Champion, Aliyah Boston.

Our contributions to this Nation are undisputed, and 104 years after our transfer from Denmark to the U.S. possession, our claim to full and inviolable rights as citizens of this country are long overdue.

COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Michigan (Ms. TLAIB) for 5 minutes.

Ms. TLAIB. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a proud Member to support the 13th Congressional District.

My district is the third poorest Congressional District in the country, and direct funding and aid to support our most vulnerable communities is so critical to communities like mine.

I want to take a moment to uplift the work that my team and I have done to deliver for our residents through the community projects funding.

I don't know if folks know, but we have the oldest Boys and Girls Club in the Nation, and they are going to see \$2 million in investments to improve the facility in Highland Park so more of our young people can come into a building that is safe and a building that is going to be able to help them thrive.

Also, the Urban Neighborhoods Initiative's Southwest Detroit Creative Connections Collaborative; they are going to be able to create a safe space, community space for our families, especially our youth. This is the community I grew up in, with 20 different ethnicities.

We are also going to be able to help Detroit homeowners receive home repair grants for energy efficiency. Enterprise Community Partners is so eager to be able to work with my seasoned residents; and my seasoned residents are eager to see their homes become not only energy efficient, but also accessible, as many are struggling with access because of disability.

The Eastside Community Network is going to be able to establish the Stoudamire Wellness HUB for the eastside Detroit residents who are, right now, struggling to access healthcare.

We are also going to be able to help, some relief—and this is just the beginning—to help many of our families in Dearborn Heights and Wayne County address the number of families that continue to be impacted by flooding because of Ecorse Creek's challenges.

We are also going to be able to support ProsperUS Detroit Micro Lending to support some of our small businesses and expand some of the work they have already done to Detroit all the way to western Wayne and Inkster.

I am also so proud of the investment that we are going to have in the Ruth Ellis Center to provide safe, affordable, identity-affirming housing for marginalized Black and Brown Detroiters, especially my LGBTQ-plus youth.

I am also going to be able to stand there with my City of Wayne residents to see, finally, the Goudy Park Amphitheater space be able to be rehabbed. It is a space that many of our schools use for graduations, for gatherings, and just really truly coming together as a community.

We are also going to be able to see over 300 of our high school students in the Western Wayne School District, along with the partnership of SEMCA, be able to access vocational technology, career-tech programs.

We are also going to see a \$2.5 million investment in our Inkster Senior Wellness Center. This is one of—again, Inkster has some of my spectacular seasoned residents, and they are eager, again, to have a space to come together, especially after the challenges during the pandemic.

I want to thank Chairwoman DeLauro and the Appropriations Committee staff, and the incredible hard work of my team, for a thoughtful and engaging process that really targeted communities with the most needs.

I am proud and committed to continued engagement with all of my 13th Congressional District communities to find funding to address the needs because they truly deserve it.

AFFORDABLE INSULIN NOW

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the incredible impact the bipartisan Affordable Insulin Now Act will have on Americans across the Nation.

It is no secret diabetes poses a major health burden to Americans across our country. Texas, in particular, suffers greatly from the effects of type 2 diabetes. Every day, new Texans are diagnosed. On top of that, the rate of new cases increases every single year.

This topic, Mr. Speaker, hits very close to home. I have seen firsthand the hurdles diabetes creates for families simply looking to live a quiet life and be alone and have a good, productive life. In my family, my mother faced uphill health battles because of diabetes most of her adult life. She died eventually of diabetes complications.

Diabetes runs in my family. In fact, my doctor tells me that no matter what I do, I may end up getting diabetes. I am one of 10 children. Five of us have already gotten diabetes and are dependent on insulin.

Sadly, this epidemic disproportionately impacts older adults, especially Latinos, minorities, and populations with lower levels of education. It remains one of the leading causes of death in Texas and the United States. In my own home county of Harris County, diabetes is the fifth leading cause of death.

Even when purchased through Medicare, insulin is more than three times as expensive in the United States than in the U.K. The bipartisan Affordable Insulin Now Act is truly needed to save lives.

The Affordable Insulin Now Act caps insulin copays at \$35 per month or 25 percent of an insurance plan's negotiated price, whichever is lower. It is a great first step, and it will save lives. But more must be done.

You see, Mr. Speaker, Americans without health insurance will not benefit from this bill. This will help those residents who are fortunate to already have health insurance, and we welcome this support. Again, it is a great first step. But much more is very needed.

Texas is the State with the highest rate of uninsured individuals and, in my district, 33 percent of the residents in my district do not have health insurance.

In fact, Mr. Speaker, my district has the highest number of uninsured people than in any other district in the Nation. To make matters worse, diabetes is highly concentrated in east Texas, the area where I live. It pains me that these folks were not included in the bill.

The immense health and emotional challenges diabetes brings to households are burdensome enough; but its economic strain is ruthless to families not fortunate enough to have insurance.

Because of corporate greed and companies focused only on profits, Texans without medical insurance face astronomical prices for insulin. In short, people with diabetes have medical expenses approximately 2.3 times higher than those who do not have diabetes.

The out-of-pocket costs for healthcare and insulin have crippled

hardworking Americans across our country. It has gotten so bad that one in four people have rationed, rationed lifesaving insulin because they could not afford proper dosage amounts. This is unacceptable and wrong, and we must do better.

No one—I repeat, no one—should have to gamble with their health by rationing insulin to make ends meet. The bipartisan Affordable Insulin Now Act will save lives, and it is a great step forward. But I will continue fighting for residents across my district who do not currently have health insurance but do need insulin. We will continue to fight until we get it done.

STOP MASS SHOOTINGS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, a recently released Violence Project study has found that more than half of all mass shootings between 1966 and 2019 occurred since 2000. There have been more and more shootings. It is getting worse and worse. Mass shootings have occurred in the workplace, on college campuses, in our houses of worship, and in our schools. We must do better.

These shootings cut off young lives and devastate families. We owe it to the victims to do more to combat gun violence in our communities. We owe it to Joaquin Oliver.

Joaquin was 17 years old when he was shot and killed with an assault rifle at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida. This is Joaquin.

But this symbol of Joaquin is also an assault rifle. You see, this is an assault rifle that was purchased by Joaquin's dad, Manny, without a background check.

Manny went to a gun show in Florida and bought a high-powered rifle without a background check. Then he went home, and he melted it down to make this statue of his son, who was killed by a similar weapon in his school on Valentine's Day.

This statue of Joaquin is now a powerful reminder of our weak gun laws and the countless American lives that have been stolen, families broken by gun violence.

When Manny went to a gun show, the seller pushed him to buy the rifle, to buy ammunition, to buy a high-capacity magazine, all at one time, without a background check. And Manny wondered, what's the rush?

What is the rush? Why does anyone need a deadly arsenal in one afternoon, with no questions asked?

We have put a lot of effort into making background checks work well for legal gun buyers. The National Instant Criminal Background System, the NICS system, returns results in as fast as 30 seconds.

Every gun buyer at a gun show, every gun buyer online, every gun buyer at a licensed dealer, every gun buyer should